problem in handling this disease. The Indian experience in tuberculosis control has two dimension to it, research and treatment. Though there has been a lot of input in terms of research, it seems the nation has not made use of the advances made in the area of treatment. The Revised National Tuberculosis Control Programme, covering 221 districts in 21 States, is said to have averted more than 1.5 lakh deaths. Yet, the disease continues to take its toll. As the menace posed by tuberculosis is of a massive dimension, there will be no real success until the most important segment of the medical system, the private sector, is involved in controlling it. Because of the inadequacies in the public healthcare system, half of the patients seek the services of private healthcare service providers. So, in order to tackle this ticking time-bomb called "tuberculosis" and save our citizens, I request the Central Government to revamp the healthcare system without delay. Thank you.

Request for starting no-frills flight services by Air India between Kerala and Gulf countries

SHRI M.P. ABDUSSAMAD SAMADANI (Kerala): Madam, my Special Mention is against the unjust decision taken by the Air India. I would like to seek the association of the hon. Members and the Hon-Chair.

Madam, this is to draw the urgent attention of the Central Government to the very important need for asking the Air India to reconsider its decision to drop the idea of "no-frills" flight services from Kerala to the Gulf countries. The concept of "no-frills" flight services was envisaged to help the ordinary air-passengers by providing lesser ticket rates. The idea was to run flights without liquor and free food service. It was also planned to hire the crew members for saving a large sum of money which is spent on crew accommodation, etc. The poor people who go to foreign countries for finding a livelihood are not at all interested in the luxuries of travel. Most of them go abroad by selling the ornaments of their wives and daughters, and even their houses and properties. They are compelled to go out of the country due to the unemployment situation that our country is facing. The "no-frills" flight services could have been a great boon to them. Generally, the Air India rates are high. The system could have helped to provide cheaper tickets. The Air India also could have made good profit by this venture. But by dropping the idea, the Air India has done great injustice to the toiling millions of the country. It is clear that

there is some kind of conspiracy behind this decision to go back from the earlier decision. Now, it is heard that a Committee is appointed to study the matter. I request the Central Government to urge upon the Air India to reconsider its decision and to take steps for starting "no-frills" flight services at the earliest. This will be a great move towards helping and saving the common man of the country and the Air India. Thank you.

SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN (Kerala): Madam, 3.5 million Keralites are staying in the Gulf countries. So, the Government has to respond to it.

SHRI M.P. ABDUSSAMAD SAMADANI: Madam, the Air India is making large profits from the flight services from Kerala.

SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Madam, 3.5 million people from Kerala are working in the Gulf countries.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Government is there.

SHRI M.P. ABDUSSAMAD SAMADANI: All the MPs from the State met the hon. Prime Minister in this regard.

SHR V.V. RAGHAVAN (Kerala): Madam, I associate myself with what Mr. Samadani has stated.

श्री रमा शंकर कौशिक (उत्तर प्रदेश): महोदया, मैं इस विषय के साथ अपने को सम्बद्ध करता हूं।

†**شری خان غفران زاہدی**: مہودیہ، میں اس وشئے کے ساتھ اپنے کو سمبدھ کرتا ہوں۔

†**श्री खान गुफरान जाहिदी** (उत्तर प्रदेश): महोदय, मैं इस विषय के साथ अपने को सम्बद्ध करता हूं।

श्रीमती सरला माहेश्वरी (पश्चिमी बंगाल): मैडम, कृपया मंत्री जी सदन को आश्वस्त कर दें।

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO (Goa): Madam, I also associate myself with what Mr. Samadani has stated.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): Madam, since the issue raised by the hon. Member has been supported by so many other Members, I

†Translation in Urdu script.

would request the concerned Minister to look into the matter and take appropriate action.

Need to initiate relief measures to boost the coffee industry in the country

SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA (Karnataka): Madam, my Special Mention is about the need for initiating relief measures to boost coffee industry in our country. Our country is one of the major producers of coffee in the world. As per the latest data of the Ministry of Commerce, production of coffee in the country in 1999-2000 was 2,92,000 metric tons; in 2000-2001, it was 3,01,200 metric tons; and in 2001-2002, it was 3,06,000 metric tons. As against that, the domestic consumption of coffee for the same period was 55,000 metric tons, 60,000 metric tons and 64,000 metric tons respectively. My home State, Karnataka, tops in the production of coffee. But it is a matter of concern that the production of coffee in Karnataka is on a decline. It was 2,10,950 metric tons in 2000-2001, 2,08,670 metric tons in 2001-2002 and 1,91,300 metric tons in 2002-2003. These trends are very much disturbing. No doubt, drought has brought down production, but it is equally true that coffee growers have lost interest in the production due to unremunerative prices both in international and domestic markets. In the international market, the coffee prices have nose-dived due to stiff competition from Vietnam and other coffee producing countries. The domestic market too is very sluggish. There are no takers of coffee resulting in severe setback to the coffee industry.

The Government and the Coffee Board are implementing various schemes for coffee growers including special coffee term loans, reduction in interest rate by one per cent on such loans, etc. But that is not enough to boost the coffee industry unless it becomes remunerative for which production has to be increased by expanding cultivation areas; the cost of production which is very high has to be reduced by innovative technology; new international markets are to be found and coffee has to be popularised in the domestic market through systematic campaigns and coffee growers, particularly the smaller ones have to be given interest free loans and other incentives. I, therefore, urge the Government to save the coffee industry, particularly in Karnataka. Thank you.